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Rafferty on Powers

Your March 6 issue carried two stories that I find interesting to place side by side. The lead story was the CIA report that pilot Francis Gary Powers "lived up to his instructions and his obligations as an American." Legislators noted that his behavior in parachuting from his stricken plane and at his Moscow trial, was beyond reproach.

The other news item revealed the probable candidacy of Dr. Maxwell Rafferty, superintendent of schools in La Canada, for the office of state superintendent of public instruction. Dr. Rafferty gained considerable prominence, locally and nationally (and a recent medal from the Freedoms Foundation) with a speech on patriotism in which he contrasted Nathan Hale and Powers.

Said Dr. Rafferty in 1961: "A year ago another young American went on trial for his life in Soviet Russia. . . . And what do we hear? 'I didn't know what I was doing. I know now I was risking world peace. My superiors were responsible.' Thank heaven, they're not all like that. But this one was. . . . These spineless, luxury-loving, spiritless Americans came right out of our classrooms."

Since American history is a particular interest of Dr. Rafferty's, I hope he will delete or correct his remarks about pilot Powers before he speaks again on patriotism in the course of his campaign for the highest education post in California schools.

MRS. HAROLD E. MARSH JR., La Canada

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